



June 20, 2023

Dear Members of the Colorado Title Board -

We write to you today in opposition to the proposed modification to Initiatives #46 and #47, the ballot measure(s) which would utilize the term "fracking" as the catch-all term for oil and gas operations being banned by the measure. Terms like "oil and gas", "oil and gas production", "oil and gas facilities" and "oil and gas workers" are common parlance among Hispanics and Spanish-language speakers among both supporters and critics of oil and gas development within the community and when communicating with the community. This is proof positive that the term "fracking" is, very simply, not widely utilized among Hispanics, Latinos, and Spanish speaking Coloradans. To ensure full and fair consideration of any ballot measure, we urge the title board to use the common language "oil and gas production" rather than more technical and less-well-known terminology like fracking or hydraulic fracturing.

The Spanish-speaking community of Colorado, like any other group, consists of diverse and intelligent individuals who can comprehend complex concepts when provided with accurate and appropriate information.

While the term "fracking" is understood by industry and political insiders, it is still a phrase that is relatively unknown to many Coloradans without context, especially among non-English speakers. It is an English-language-derived, shortened, and colloquial term for hydraulic fracturing that provides no context or explanation for the process, which is essential for any voter in deciding if it should continue in Colorado. If the board finds it necessary to define a specific process, we believe it is best to provide more details and context when explaining the process of fracturing rocks below the earth's surface and injecting high-pressure water, chemicals, and materials intended to prevent those fractures from closing to allow for oil and gas extraction.

A 2016 study by the Clean Air Task Force (CATF), League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and the National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA), titled "The Impact of Air Pollution from the Oil and Gas Industry," mentions the term "fracking" a total of zero times, "hydraulic fracturing" just once, and "oil and gas" 120 times<sup>1</sup>.

Even amongst organizations not supportive of the oil and gas industry, the term "fracking" is not commonplace. A 2022 polling memo from the progressive organization Data for Progress which gauged public opinion among Hispanic and Spanish speaking

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://cdn.catf.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/21094458/CATF\\_Pub\\_LatinoCommunitiesAtRisk.pdf](https://cdn.catf.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/21094458/CATF_Pub_LatinoCommunitiesAtRisk.pdf)



voters on the industry fails to mention either “fracking” or “hydraulic fracturing” even once.<sup>2</sup>

Recent news stories, such as a 2023 Axios story that highlighted Hispanic workers in the oil and gas industry, also did not mention either “fracking” or “hydraulic fracturing” a single time.<sup>3</sup>

The State of Colorado has a responsibility to ensure transparency, fairness, and inclusivity in its governance and legislative processes. We ask that the title board ensure this by providing a more widely understood term or an expansive definition of the hydraulic fracturing process for those requesting a Spanish ballot.

Sincerely,

Sonia Gutierrez, Vice President  
Western Colorado Latino Chamber of Commerce

---

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.filesforprogress.org/memos/dfp\\_Climate\\_Power\\_Latino\\_Voters.pdf](https://www.filesforprogress.org/memos/dfp_Climate_Power_Latino_Voters.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.axios.com/2023/04/25/oil-and-gas-climate-change-gabe-vasquez-sylvia-garcia>